American Highway Technology

Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center

American Highway Technology Gets Concrete Results From Lean Manufacturing Solutions

Client Profile:
American Highway Technology is a manufacturer of metal dowels that support highway concrete. These dowels enable highways to better withstand changing weather conditions and high traffic loads. American Highway Technology, located in Kankakee, Illinois, is the largest manufacturer of metal dowels in the United States, and sells primarily to state and municipal governments. The company employs less than 100 people.

Situation:
American Highway Technology (AHT) is in an intensely competitive, price-driven industry. In order to stay ahead of regional competitors, the company needed to develop new systems to reduce waste, increase manufacturing productivity, and improve inventory management and production scheduling. AHT has frequently turned to the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help with all facets of its business operations, and it asked the organization for help with this challenge.

Solution:
IMEC worked with AHT to construct a value stream map of the entire facility operations, identifying opportunities to improve product flow, reduce set-up times, and cut waste. IMEC then proposed a series of fully integrated lean manufacturing solutions to address the targeted problems.

Results:
Improved set-up times.
Reduced inventory.
Improved quality.
Improved cycle times.

Testimonial:
"Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center specialists bring state-of-the art, affordable solutions to companies like ours. They're knowledgeable and professional and understand all facets of our business. We know we can count on IMEC to help us meet a challenge or respond to an opportunity."

Jesus Valdez, Plant Manager